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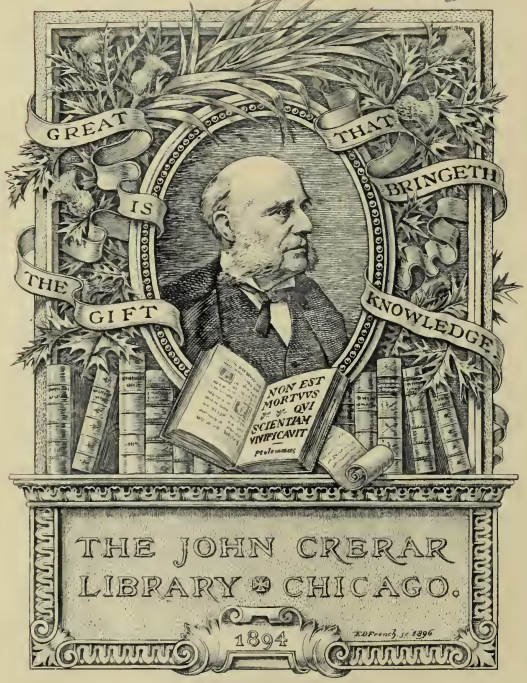

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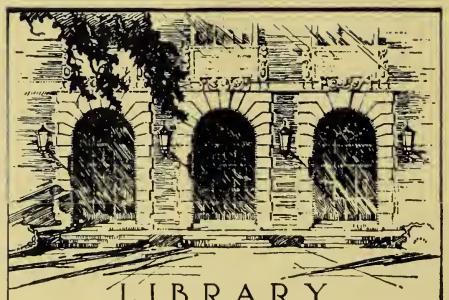

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THE MUSIC DIVISION OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

METHODS, POLICIES AND RESOURCES

O. G. Sonneck

Chief of the Division

The Library of Congress was founded in 1800 with an appropriation of a lump sum of $5,000 for the purchase of books. About 3,000 volumes had been accumulated by 1814, when the Library was destroyed during the British attack of Washington. Then Thomas Jefferson's collection of about 7,000 volumes was acquired by our government, and the collections had increased to 55,000 volumes, when in 1851 the Library was again in part destroyed by fire in the Capitol. Not more than about 20,000 volumes were saved. Today, or rather at the end of the fiscal year 1908 (June 30), the Library of Congress contains about two millions and a half of books, pamphlets, manuscripts, maps, prints and pieces of music. More than four hundred and fifty persons are employed in this palace of books; the annual appropriations for the increase of the collections have grown from $1,000 in 1818 to more than $100,000, and the total appropriations, for all purposes, now reach the colossal sum of nearly $800,000.

These figures bear a message. They imply a vast and complicated scale of operations, extraordinary problems for administrative genius and opportunities for systematic development probably not equalled in any other national library. I say, national library, for though originally founded as a Library for Congress and still fully maintaining this character, the Library of Congress has gradually become, if not in name, at least in fact, policy and by circumstances our National Library. Historically considered, this tendency was made possible when, on August 10th. 1846, an act of Congress

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directed that one copy of each copyrighted book, map, musical composition, etc., should be delivered to the Librarian of Congress. It is notorious that this far reaching act could not be properly enforced until the passage of the copyright law of 1870 placed the copyright business under the Librarian of Congress, called for the deposit in the Library of two copies of each copyrighted article and provided for the removal of copyright deposits from the Patent Office and from the United States district courts. Thus the Library of Congress was enabled to exercise one main function of a national library, namely, in the words of Herbert Putnam, Librarian of Congress since 1899, "so far as possible, to preserve a continuous and unbroken exhibit of at least the important issues of the American press." Of great importance was further the international copyright act of March 3d, 1891, which made it possible for foreign authors to obtain under certain restrictions copyright in the United States upon the same terms as native authors, except that the fee for entry in the case of foreigners is double that for the native author, $1.00 instead of 50 cents. Under the operation of this provision the privileges of copyright in the United States have been extended to the authors (including the composers, of course) of many European countries. The effect of this international copyright act was particularly far reaching on the musical side of the Library of Congress, inasmuch as it allowed European composers to deposit for purpose of copyright protection two copies of every musical composition *printed abroad,* whereas books proper (with certain modifications) cannot be copyrighted here unless printed in the United States.

Not until the removal of the Library of Congress in 1897 from the Capitol to the new building was a special Music Division created, and I hasten to add that its present location and equipment are still temporary. The collection accumulated prior to 1897 was neither accessioned, classified, catalogued, nor made accessible. The labors of the division during the four years after the removal were largely to reduce the

material to order and make it available for use. But the current accessions, then numbering already more than 16,000 items a year, had also to be incorporated, and no one can appreciate better than I the task confronting my predecessor to infuse a semblance of life into a dead mass of several hundred thousand pieces of music. The present method of classification and cataloguing, the policy and manner of systematic development, the broader scope of usefulness date from the reorganization of the Music Division in 1902, when also all the books on music and all musical manuscripts, in short everything of primarily musical interest were put under the custody of this division.

Aside from gifts, international exchanges through the Smithsonian Institution and other minor sources, the accessions to our Music Division accrue mainly through copyright and purchase. After the two copies of a musical composition deposited for copyright have been recorded in the Copyright Office, copy A is filed in the archives of that division, and copy B is turned over to the Music Division. Material that has been purchased comes to this division from the Order Division, where all commercial accounts are kept. After receipt in the Music Division, the books on music and the music proper are accessioned as to source (copyright, purchase, gift, etc.), and classified according to a scheme of classification which was devised and adopted after a critical examination of the schemes in force in the principal American and European libraries and with a view to the particular needs of the Library of Congress. There is nothing very startling about this scheme, which has been printed as a book of 112 pages, except its minuteness and general disposition. We divide the collections into three large groups, Music, represented by the letter M, Literature of music (all biographical, bibliographical, historical, philosophical, etc., books and pamphlets on music), represented by the letters ML, and all theoretical or technical material, represented by the letters MT. This last group includes not only books on harmony, counterpoint, pianoforte

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methods, etc., but also all purely instructive music as Etudes and instructive (teaching) editions, for instance of Beethoven's sonatas. Therein our classification differs materially from most schemes, which distinguish only between music and books on music of every description. This difference has led to a misunderstanding of our resources when a comparison was made between our and other collections of books on music. If the customary distinction is made the basis of comparison, naturally a substantial part of our MT section would have to be added to the ML section with the result that instead of possessing about 8,000 books on music, the Library of Congress really possesses about 12,000.

The three main sections are systematically and logically subdivided, proceeding from general to special, by forms, instruments, subjects, periods, countries, as the grouping would suggest itself with slight differences of opinion to every musician and musical scholar. Each subdivision is represented by a numerical symbol, the sequence of numbers bearing, as far as possible, some logical relation to the subject matter to which they have been assigned. Thus, for instance, M 1500 means Full scores of operas, M 1503 means vocal scores of operas, M 2000 Full scores of oratorios, M 2003 vocal scores or oratorios. At first sight the minuteness of the scheme bewilders, but it is in keeping with the bewildering extent and variety of the collections and it is planned to provide for future as well as for present needs. Upon examination it will be found that this apparently rigid scheme is elastic, permits both contraction and expansion and may, therefore, be used with convenient modifications in smaller, or if such exist, larger collections. For instance, a small library instead of using our numerous subdivisions with the corresponding numerous class numbers for books on the history of opera, would keep all such books alphabetically arranged by author under our number ML 1700, regardless of country, period, etc., We, ourselves, I hasten to add, do not use more subdivisions than are considered convenient for our purposes, the others are

simply provisional. While to a novice the scheme may look somewhat complicated on paper, we have found it to be comparatively simple in application, and while improvements have suggested themselves from time to time, some too late for insertion, the scheme fortunately has, on the whole, stood the test of time and strain. At any rate, it is not merely a theoretical scheme on paper, as some schemes are. It is really applied. That means, the books and the music are really filed on the shelves according to this scheme, regardless of size, bulk or date of acquisition. In other words, all vocal scores of oratorios, all symphonies, all biographies, all books on harmony, and so forth, stand together on the shelves in the sequence of the scheme. The advantages of such a method for supplying a reader with as much material as possible in the shortest possible time would appear to be obvious, but as a matter of fact, the method is not in use everywhere, and in some important institutions books and music are still shelved regardless of their contents merely by size or date of accession. Our method has some further advantages, but I shall mention only one which is more or less characteristic of the Library of Congress. Our policy is to give responsible, serious students access to the shelves. This privilege would be of no earthly use unless books on the subject in which a person is interested, were kept in one particular group. The applied scheme of classification together with this privilege will obviously save a student much time, and the satisfaction of thus having saved him much time more than outweighs the fact that he occasionally turns a book upside down or forgets to replace it at all.

After all is said, the opponents of a subject classification of music, which the Library of Congress champions, have only one argument to offer which deserves serious consideration. It is this. We do not keep all the works by one composer together, but we separate them according to form, instrumental combination and so forth. Thus the works of Raff, for instance, will not be found in one place under Raff, but his

operas are shelved under Raff with all other operas, his symphonies, songs, etc., with the symphonies, songs, etc., of other composers. I do not know but that the other scheme would work better in a small or medium-sized collection, but in a huge collection, like ours, it probably would not for certain physical and technical reasons. The whole matter is one of preference, it depends upon the answer to the hypothetical question: Are musical readers more interested in studying chamber music, songs, oratorios by different masters, or in studying the chamber music, songs, oratorios by one master? The answer is just as problematic as the question is hypothetical.

After a book or composition is classified and before it is bound and placed on the shelves, it must be catalogued. All books on music are turned over for this purpose to the experts of the Catalogue Division. Their catalogue cards are then printed and supplied to us by the Card Distribution Section for author and subject entries, and, if a book is a collection of essays, it may happen that thirty or more cards are filed in the catalogue for one single book. After years of steady work the Catalogue Division has finished cataloguing all our books on music, but it must be noted that this catalogue exists in form of printed cards only, not in book form, as some inquirers appear to think.

Music proper is not catalogued in the Catalogue Division but in the Music Division, and no cards are printed for music of any kind. This might seem to be an anomaly, yet the explanation is simple. Exactly because our catalogue experts are expected to work with precision and accuracy, the task of handling about 20,000 musical compositions yearly, in addition to many thousands of books, would be physically impossible. Consequently we of the Music Division are forced to struggle with the problem best as our inadequate force of six persons can. We have evolved a set of cataloguing rules which answer our needs and all practical purposes. In most cases two cards suffice, one for the composer, the other for

the form or combination. In the case of operas, songs, etc., we also enter a shorter card under the title, so that generally not more than three cards are written. We abstain from analyzing the contents of collections, and we bestow analytical attention generally only on such volumes as those of the different "Denkmäler."

Formerly the Catalogue of Copyright Entries, issued by the Copyright Office, was printed in such a form that to use it even as a current index to composers was impossible. Consequently we of the Music Division made desperate efforts to catalogue every copyrighted piece of music that came to us. Since, however, two years ago the form of this monthly bulletin was changed so that any copyrighted piece may be traced either under composer or title, we catalogue in the Music Division only such compositions, or rather classes of compositions, that in our judgment warrant the labor involved, and, of course, this rule applies also to every piece of purchased music, inasmuch as we do not buy music that is not desirable. The rest is filed on the shelves according to the classification scheme. For this material the Copyright Catalogue is presumed to be a sufficient guide. Nor do we really need such a guide, because the scheme of classification in itself acts as such and allows us to find every piece of music whether catalogued by us or not.

This obliging feature of the classification scheme is our salvation and that of the public, because more than one-half of our music collections remain uncatalogued. The catalogue is complete only for the material received since 1897, and in its present form of entry only for the material received since 1902, including such arrears as we have been able to consider from time to time. Even for this material a complete catalogue by subject or form does not exist. We are bending all our efforts towards completing the subject catalogue at least for the most important classes (such as in orchestral and chamber music), but I fear that we have a Tantalus task before us. Only for one class is our subject catalogue really

complete, for our collection of full scores of operas, and it is the only branch of our collections of which so far the catalogue has been printed in book form. One other part of our catalogue has aroused interest, in Europe perhaps more than in America. Every number of currently received musical magazines is analyzed by me personally and subject cards for every article thus analyzed are written by me (yearly about 4,000) and entered in a separate catalogue. As we receive currently about ninety musical magazines, of which fifty important European, the Library of Congress possesses an index to current periodical literature such as perhaps no other institution can boast. Not only this, but gradually back sets are being taken up and the beginning has been made to catalogue articles on music in the non-musical American magazines in greater numbers than appear in Poole's Index and more systematically . The value of what has been done already is recognized by European scholars, as well as by American, and it is realized that by sheer necessity some day this Periodical Index of the Library of Congress will become invaluable, indeed one of the principal assets of the Music Division.

After a book has gone through these and sundry other processes of library anatomy, it is at last ready for use, and "the purpose of the administration is the freest possible use of the books consistent with their safety; and the widest possible use consistent with the convenience of Congress." Regulations limiting use are adopted very sparingly and only as experience proves them to be necessary. For instance, there is no limit to the number of books a reader may draw for reference use, but a certain limit, of course, governs the home use. This itself, as the Library of Congress is in principle a reference, not a circulating library, is restricted to persons designated by law, such as members of both branches of Congress and of the diplomatic corps, but the Librarian has the power (and he is known to exercise this discretionary power with liberality) to extend the privilege to persons engaged in research that is likely to widen the boundaries of human

knowledge. This applies also to the Music Division, and he does not hesitate to include, upon proper and convincing application, heads of music schools, conductors of important musical organizations, prominent local musicians, who for special reasons and for a specified time need the home use of certain material that is to be had only at the Library of Congress or is too expensive for a musician's private library, or cannot be obtained at all at the music stores. Resident musicians are, of course, expected to consult very rare items at the Library, which is open to readers from 9 A. M. to 10 P. M. on week days and from 2 P. M. to 10 P. M. on Sundays and most legal holidays. For the convenience of our music readers a pianoforte has been installed and is used frequently. Not, of course, for finger exercises, but for *prima vista* reading purposes. This distinction, by the way, could not at first be made clear to certain of our patrons, and some of the tricks invented by that imperishable class of people who will grab the whole hand when a finger is offered, were really amusing. One ingenious future Paderewski, for instance, asked ostensibly for a Beethoven sonata, placed it on the piano and gleefully practiced a Czerny étude. Non-resident musicians engaged in such serious research as defined by the Librarian, may occasionally avail themselves of our resources through what is called the system of inter-library-loan. That is, they apply to their local library; this, in turn, applies to us and we send the material to that particular library for the applicant's use at his expense, but not to him personally. It goes without saying, of course, that we do not forward musical books or music such as it is the duty of his local library to supply. In this manner, we are glad to assist quite often some well known scholars of Boston, New York and other cities. Indeed, in the inter-library-loan we see one of the vital duties and functions of our National Library.

As to types of use and users, it would be difficult to classify them, or to point out such as do not frequent other libraries in America. Here, as elsewhere, some seek information on

points of musical technique, others on bibliography, history or esthetics, on national songs, on the finer distinctions between the different editions of a master's works, on questions of copyright, on formation and management of libraries, on prices of rarities, on best methods for music in schools, etc., etc. In short, a variety of subjects approached as the case may be either from the standpoint and with the interest and methods of the business man, the lawyer, the person desirous of musical culture, the critic, the scholar, the music teacher, the conductor or the "mere" musician. In addition to the *bona fide* reader, we, too, deal with a large number of persons who merely ask questions, either in person or by letter. As far as the Library may be expected to answer them at all, we do so promptly and to the best of our ability. Generally the inquiries pertain to good or best books on special subjects or to preferably bibliographical and historical facts. If not requiring too elaborate research, every librarian who considers himself first a friend of the public and second a Cerberus of books, will answer gladly all inquiries that reach him. We draw a diplomatic line, however, if we are asked to furnish articles ready made for club use or to give a complete list, with prices, of all the works of Bach or to trace the first composer guilty of consecutive fifths. The extent of these legitimate and illegitimate inquiries has not been made a matter of statistics here, nor do we lay much stress on checking pedantically the number of real readers or the number and authors of books used. We hold that not the quantity of use counts, but the result, the effect of use. Still, it may be interesting, as a matter of comparison, to learn that we supply annually about 16,000 books, pamphlets and compositions to some 3,500 readers. Considering that Washington, a city of about 350,000 inhabitants, is not yet one of our main musical centers and that for obvious reasons practically only two-thirds of the population really count, this use of our Music Division is considerable and gratifying.

Were the Capital of the United States located at one of the

main musical centers of our country, possibly the Music Division would be used to a far greater extent. But since the Library of Congress is located at Washington, and since every American now looks to the Library of Congress as to our National Library, this question of relative use certainly does not enter into the problem of how far the musical collections of our National Library should be developed. Logically, if a special music division was created in our National Library, it should at least be made worthy of being a special division in a national library so that the musicians of our country will take a reasonable professional interest in the collections.

On this premise a policy of systematic development was outlined in 1902, and more correctly on the premise that in music, too, the Library of Congress, as a national library, exercises functions differing from those of a State, municipal or college library. At least in theory, and whether these functions pertain to facilities for reference or research. Briefly stated, the Library of Congress aims at a reasonably comprehensive collection of material that bears in any direction on music in America, and more particularly on American music. What the Library of Congress attempts beyond this, is exactly what any other large institution would attempt to do which realizes that the art of music is and always has been a very essential factor and feature of civilization.

The starting point of our policy also clearly suggests the characteristic difference between the Library of Congress and the national libraries of Europe. Their interest both in American music and music in America is slight, except in so far as American composers, methods or conditions have become or will become of international interest. On the other hand, while American music, as the product of American brain and press, is deemed to be of paramount importance in our National Library, yet the peculiar development and status of music in America, a reflex of music in Europe, compels the Library of Congress to collect the musical product of European brain and press very much in the same manner as

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European libraries do or would like to do. The difference in attitude is merely one of degree and the boundary line of competition begins where the community of historical interests stops. Roughly speaking, about the year 1700.

For this reason, the Library of Congress does not at present and as a rule enter into competition with European institutions with reference to music, published or manuscript, before 1700. Any such attempt would clearly tend to scatter the scarce and costly works of the old masters still further and give undue prominence to a selfish *museum of costly relics* policy over the best interests of the scholar. What sense would there be, for instance, in paying heavily for possibly unique copies of original editions of a few works by Palestrina, and thus possibly prevent some European institution from putting before the Palestrina specialist a full set of his works? Such a set or even a collection of the original editions representative enough to be of any practical use to the American scholar, the Library of Congress at this late date could never hope to acquire, even if its entire appropriation were given to the Music Division. If such works are of great interest in some other direction, let us say, as characteristic and sufficiently illustrative specimens of early music printing, it is part of our policy to make exceptions to our rule, and they are frequent, of course, as concerns early English music. Nor do we turn our back pedantically on recognized musical landmarks if their price is at all within the means of a public institution. Therefore, we did not hesitate to buy a fine copy of Caccini's "Nuove Musiche." But on the whole, the Library of Congress contents itself at present, so far as music before 1700 is concerned, with acquiring it as reprinted principally in the splendid historical subscription publications undertaken by the foreign governments, learned societies and firms like Breitkopf & Härtel. It is different with the old printed books on music. In the interest of the American scholar, the Library acquires the originals extensively because extremely few of these books have been re-

printed and because it is still entirely feasible to form a representative collection at a reasonable cost.

Beginning with the eighteenth century, *the Library of Congress aims at a collection of music and books on music sufficiently comprehensive to ultimately release the American scholar of the necessity of consulting European libraries, except for research not bearing directly or indirectly on music in America as a reflex of music in Europe.* This involves the policy to be inclusive rather than exclusive in collecting characteristic works of any form, first, by masters known at any time to the American public; second, by those not known here but having an evolutional relation to them; third, by all masters not affected by this distinction, but who are essential for a proper historical perspective. We also hold it to be a sound principle of development that by generously considering the present, we prepare best for the usefulness of the collections to the future historians for whom our perhaps now commonplace present will be a fascinating past. Strange to say, this obviously correct attitude is not shared by all my European colleagues, but I believe to have driven the argument home when I had occasion to present my theories of methodical development of musical libraries before the congress of the I. M. G. at Basle in 1906.

These are the main, one might say, the philosophical principles governing our policy of systematic development, but, of course, any number of minor theoretical and practical considerations enter into the problem. For instance, as the Library of Congress is a reference and research, not a circulating or conservatory library, scores have precedence over orchestral parts. The latter are acquired as a rule only if scores do not exist, as, for instance, of most symphonies of the early nineteenth century. Similar considerations govern the acquisition of arrangements with exception of vocal or pianoforte scores, which very frequently must take the place of scores if such do not exist or are too expensive to warrant the purchase of a full score of works neither artistically nor

historically very important. In addition, of course, their usefulness in breeding familiarity with the great operas or oratorios is obvious. If not to be had in good printed editions, we make it a point to acquire important works in contemporary manuscript copies, transcripts made specially for the Library of Congress, or, if preferable, in photographic reproductions. Nor does this policy stop at older works, as we occasionally were a copy, not the autograph. And after all, what would a sincere interest in autographs of the great masters help up, have important modern works transcribed that are not to be had in printed scores, as, for instance, Heinrich von Herzogenberg's beautiful "Erntefeier." On the other hand, we feign to take no interest in musical autographs except of desirable works which exist in no other form, may be had at a price slightly higher than a manuscript copy or which come our way, as has really happened, on the presumption that they if a letter of Wagner costs several hundred and a Beethoven sonata fetches 40,000 marks? You all know the fable of the fox and the grapes, and so do we.

In the matter of autographs the great European libraries — think of the stupendous collection of Bach autographs at the Berlin Royal Library — are so immeasurably ahead of us, that to wrest a few specimens from them on the open market would be folly. In this respect our professional policy is exactly the same as expressed above as towards original editions of Palestrina. Yet, once the problems nearer us have been solved, we may perhaps afford to give expression to the dictates of sentiment and acquire such autograph specimens in the same spirit as an American patriot may acquire Washington or Lincoln souvenirs. It is entirely different with autographs of American masters. These should be saved from disappearance and destruction and the logical place to preserve the manuscripts of great American musicians for future scientific or tributary reference is the Library of Congress, our National Library. That, however, cannot be accomplished unless the American composers or their heirs or pub-

lic-spirited citizens concur in this view, entrust such national treasures to our care and follow the example set by Edward MacDowell, Dudley Buck, Prof. and Mrs. John Knowles Paine.

It is one thing to have a definite policy, another to carry it out effectively. We had the advantage of not being hampered by rigid traditions, and we could, therefore, adopt constructive methods of systematic development as will always suggest themselves when a good collection is to be built up from the ground. The usual, one might almost say, the old-fashioned method is to patiently wait for and check desirable items as offered in the catalogues of publishers and second-hand dealers. This method is probably the only feasible one for new books or new music. It is even a fairly sensible one if a collection is so far advanced that the problem merely is one of filling in gaps. Yet even then the objection is that during the patient reliance on one's good luck with second-hand catalogues, the gaps may become too numerous for successful ultimate action, and that many years may pass before annoying gaps can be filled. In the Library of Congress we, too, use this passive method where it may be supplied with substantial results, but we go far beyond it by bringing also the specialist's constructive energies and abilities into play. He is supposed to know where his collections require strengthening and what books are needed to make the collections symmetric and of practical use to the general reader or scholar, and it is part of his business to compile systematic want lists covering the interests of his special division. This is not the work of a few months of course, it takes years of careful work, such as only a specialist with adequate knowledge of his particular subject may be expected to undertake. Moreover, it is frequently a very monotonous task, and perhaps this is one of the reasons why specialists prefer the Pandora box of second-hand catalogues. Naturally they do not advance this monotony as their real argument against the constructive method, but they say that such want lists are of no practical use in

view of the generally inadequate appropriation allotted to music divisions. This is a grave mistake. Not even in the Library of Congress are such long want lists acted upon at once, but when the Librarian of Congress does see his way clear to switch a substantial sum to the Music Division, we are ready for the campaign at a moment's notice. The lists are then placed into the hands of reliable and energetic dealers. It is to their advantage, of course, not only to ransack their own stock for report, but to keep a sharp lookout for the things we want, particularly for rarities. Moreover, they can afford to supply us such large orders at a very much lower price than otherwise, and the saving in clerical labor, correspondence, and therefore expense of time and money, is also considerable.

After all, the result is the test of any method, and this constructive method undoubtedly has brought speedier and more substantial results to our library than would have been possible by the catalogue-checking method alone. They repay the specialist amply for the many months of tedious toil in compiling such want lists, that otherwise neither give the personal satisfaction which the compilation of a catalogue or of a bibliography affords.

To give an adequate idea of the extent of this activity, I may mention that a fairly complete list of all the books published on music before 1800 was compiled by me for our own administrative benefit, and a representative list of such after 1800 to date, further systematic want lists of early English psalm-tune collections, orchestral and chamber music of all nations, early vocal scores of operas, etc., etc. Those of last year alone fill 350 typewritten pages, and many more are to come. Perhaps the most difficult and interesting, though one of the smallest, was that compiled in the interest of our collection of full scores of operas. Realizing the impossibility of buying many old opera scores on the open market — I mean those of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which, with the exception of the French, generally exist in manuscript only — we embarked on the project of acquiring the histori-

cally important operas of olden times in transcript made specially for the Library of Congress. This called for much painstaking and complicated preliminary work. The idea is not absolutely original with us, but the scale — we are reaching out in all directions for several hundred transcripts — was unprecedented. We had the satisfaction of seeing Prof. Kretschmar, to whom, as the greatest living authority on the history of opera, the list was submitted, advise but comparatively few modifications and additions.

All this may create the impression that the Music Division of the Library of Congress is working with unlimited means. It is not. We have a liberal, but limited allowance which the Librarian stretches if he considers it to the advantge of the Library. At any rate, we are obliged to expend this allowance with discrimination and by a strategic concentration of our financial artillery on certain points. In other words, we are working along the lines of carefully laid plans of development in a chronological backward direction and allow ourselves to be swayed from this path only in case of emergency. These plans carry into effect what I have elsewhere termed the theory of *concentric* development. This means that first the nucleus of a library of moderate size but complete in itself was formed, what one may call a good working collection. Then we drew a wider circle, and now the circle which we are drawing and which is so wide that it will require years to perfect it, reflects the "duty of the National Library to aid the unusual need with the unusual book."

On July 1st, 1908, the Music Division housed 481,568 volumes and pieces of music, 8,020 biographical, historical, etc., books and pamphlets on music, and 10,990 theoretical and technical works, of which possibly 4,000 would be classified elsewhere with books on music, in all 500,587 volumes, pamphlets and pieces. Of this huge collection naturally the bulk came to us through copyright, during the last six years alone 127,405 items, the fiscal year 1905-6 reaching the maximum of 25,086. For the past fiscal year, however, only 13,609 were

reported, and our accessions through copyright will not exceed the last figure materially in the future. This does not permit the inference that suddenly the actual number of copyright deposits has fallen off. On the contrary, it is keeping pace with the development of the music publishing business in our country, but the Music Division no longer accept for its files every copyrighted article as it still did in 1905-6. We now weed out and leave in the archives of the Copyright Office all material which plainly either has no value whatever, or only an ephemeral value; in short, what we or any other library would unhesitatingly describe as undesirable. This material, however, is not lost to posterity, as, with the aid of the Catalogue of Copyright Entries, it may be traced and even placed before an insistent reader. That other libraries would desire all the material that we do accept for our files is doubtful, yet, given adequate appropriations, I think that they would not object to at least one-half of what is now considered desirable for the Music Division. This material includes the majority of European copyright deposits, and though of late years European music publishers unmistakably seek to protect very much less of their music in proportion to the whole output than even six years ago, thus forcing us to purchase extensively desirable current European music, yet the international copyright agreement of 1891 tends to swell our collections automatically every year with thousands of scores, songs, piano pieces, etc., that other libraries here and in Europe are compelled to buy. And this advantage will be ours until the rules governing copyrights are radically changed. However, the 13,609 items selected this year from the mass of copyright deposits for the Music Division's use do not represent the actual number of our accessions. They amounted to 20,759 items. In other words, leaving aside gifts and exchanges, we purchased last year alone about 7,000 volumes of music and books on music, and in 1905-6, when we still accepted all copyrighted deposits, our total accessions reached the enormous figure of 28,977. Within the last six years we have bought

more than 19,000 items, ranging in commercial value from twenty-five cents to the lustily climbing market price of Caccini's "Nuove Musiche" or Marco da Gagliano's "Dafne". Keeping all this in mind and taking a bird's-eye view of the entire huge collection of more than half a million items, I should say that two-thirds are copyrighted trash from the standpoint of the musician. The other third is at least desirable, and we may safely estimate that at least one hundred thousand items merit preservation from the standpoint of the historian.

Until 1902 the Music Division depended for its resources almost exclusively upon the double-edged effects of the copyright deposit regulations. Leaving aside the several thousand items copyrighted by European music publishers between 1891 and 1902, mostly music by present-day composers, therefore, very little by the majority of noteworthy composers of the nineteenth century, the collections until 1902, generally speaking, represented only the product of the American press, either as original compositions and books on music by Americans, or reprints of European publications. Furthermore, though music copyright in our country dates at least from 1783, the peculiar history of our copyright legislation, as it affects the Library of Congress, and to which I have already briefly alluded, accounts for the fact that our collections embrace in the main musical products of the American press only from 1819 on. But within these limits, while not absolutely complete, our collection of American music and books on music by sheer force of circumstances is and always will be unique. The output of the last sixty years is distributed on the shelves according to our system of classification, but that for the thirty years previous is preserved in 300 substantial volumes which have been assigned a place of honor. To my knowledge these 300 volumes elicited the first newspaper article on our collection. It appeared in the Washington *Globe,* November 3d, 1854, and was from there reprinted in part in Dwight's *Journal of Music,* November 11th, 1854, under the heading, "Extraordinary col-

lection of American Music". "Recently arranged and neatly and substantially bound," it was termed "the most extraordinary collection of music, we suppose, ever beheld in this country or perhaps in any other."

This compliment applies, of course, with still greater force to the sixty years following. As to American music or music printed in America previous to 1819, it must suffice to remark that our collection of sacred music, principally the psalm-tune collections, is good, but probably not as good as the Hubert Main collection in the Newberry Library in Chicago, or the James Warrington collection now under Prof. Pratt's care, and not better than those at Yale, Worcester and elsewhere. Nor have we much reason to boast of our early secular American music. Our only consolation is, that no really comprehensive collection of the kind exists anywhere, and probably cannot be formed at this late date, because, through negligence, ignorance and natural forces of destruction, most of this music has entirely disappeared. It is easier to find medieval codices than the compositions of Francis Hopkinson or Alexander Reinagle and other American worthies of the eighteenth century. True, they arouse more or less only a patriotic antiquarian interest, but it is exactly this purely American point of view which defines their importance in our National Library. Thus, when the late Mr. Lewis J. Davis presented some autograph sonatas of his ancestor Reinagle to us, we rejoiced more than if they had been autographs of some composers like Hasse or Galuppi. Similarly, the autograph scores of MacDowell's "Indian Suite", Dudley Buck's opera "Serapis", Paine's unfinished symphonic poem "Lincoln", appeal to us quite as fully as would to a European librarian important autograph scores by Tchaikovsky, Brahms or César Franck. And again, the musical by-products of the Civil War would hardly be deemed attractive abroad, yet in our country their patriotic associations give them a distinct value regardless of the question of musical merit. For instance, the first edition of "Dixie", by dint of its scarcity and the spell the

stirring melody casts over all good Americans, is a treasure from our point of view immeasurably more precious than the first edition, let me say, of "Die Wacht am Rhein", or the Garibaldi Hymn. Of these by-products of the Civil War period, we possess probably by far the most important collection, and if we succeeded in rescuing much of the Southern musical ammunition, which was not copyrighted here, and for this and other reasons has become very rare, it is largely due to my assistant, Mr. Whittlesey's, familiarity with this type of publications.

Before 1902 the Library of Congress possessed ludicrously few European publications, whether music or books on music. European music copyrighted since 1891, some old English song collections, a few odds and ends of mysterious provenience, including a pityfully lonesome edition of Beethoven's symphonies, that was about all. It would have been absolutely impossible to study here with profit the music of even the greatest masters. A vast desert wherever one looked beyond the comparatively narrow boundaries of the American press. We have had but six years to remedy this frightful state of affairs. It is, therefore, only fair that our efforts be judged in the light of this fact. We are not given to megalomania. Neither are we the victims of the equally obnoxious habit of micromania. We know better than any casual observer possibly could know where the shoe pinches us. On the other hand, we no longer discourage comparison with the most famous institutions of the Old World.

Remarkable, in some respect unsurpassed, as our resources have suddenly become, they are not yet what our plans of development are bound to make them within a few years. Hence the expert will find a certain lack of symmetry in the branches of the collection. Some are fully developed, others not yet so. Hence to judge the merits and defects of our present collections calls for the same attitude of mind as in viewing a half finished monumental building. For instance, our collection of national songs and their literature, while substantial enough

for a good working library, is not what we expect to make it. Similarly, our collection of vocal scores of oratorios, cantatas, even operas, organ music, and so forth, will be strengthened so considerably in the near future as to be in keeping with our fully developed sections. Then again, only during the last two or three years have we found it convenient to turn our ambition to eighteenth century music. Though probably we already have more of this than may be found in other American libraries, the collection could not bear a moment's comparison, for example, with that at the Royal Library of Berlin. Still, it is growing rapidly into something really useful to the historian, and we already possess quite a few things, particularly in manuscript and of English imprint, that are not frequently found. We appear to have, for instance, some symphonies by that master of the strange epicurian tastes, Anton Filtz, not mentioned in Riemann's bibliography. We have about thirty of the forty-five cembalo concerts of Carl Ph. Em. Bach, and we were able to supply some of Haydn's unpublished Divertimenti to the editors of the complete edition of his works now in process of publication.

On the other hand, our collection of old opera and oratorio librettos is painfully weak, yet without these the student of early opera and oratorio will always find himself handicapped.* Furthermore, our collection of music printed or in manuscript before 1700, does not deserve to be called a collection. In fact, we have little of this kind, unless printed in English or reprinted. For the reasons stated, we do not attempt to waste our energy and funds in that direction, nor on autographs of great musicians of which we possess mostly such only as come incidentally in dedication copies. Finally, not even the original editions of the works of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, etc., so important for text-critical and editorial purposes are numerous. Until recently we contented ourselves

* It is characteristic of the speed of our development that these words, written in October, are now absolutely incorrect. Not only did the acquisition of the Longe collection of old English plays enrich us by several hundred early English opera librettos, but the Library of Congress has also since acquired the famous Albert Schatz collection of more than 11,000 librettos—presumably the largest collection of its kind.

with their works in the "Gesammt Ausgaben", but we are now gradually going back to the original editions. In this connection, it is significant that not a single library exists that may boast of complete sets of the works of our classics in the original editions.

These, and others, are our defects and weaknesses, temporary or intentional, if the single branches of our collection are compared with each other, or if our collection, as a whole, is compared with other collections of corresponding magnitude and scope. Fortunately we have our strong points, too, and strong not only in plan but in fact.

The figures for our books on music speak for themselves, yet it may be added that we are particularly strong in biographical and general historical literature and in current periodicals. With the orders already placed, it is merely a question of weeks or months until the Library of Congress may point to a collection of books on music surpassed only in very few directions. Unprecedented has been the accumulation of books on music printed before 1800. When Mr. Krehbiel compiled his valuable article on American libraries for the new Grove, we still had reason to send him conservative information. The volume was published in 1906, and already the information concerning us is entirely out of date. Mr. Krehbiel, when dealing with the Lenox Library, took occasion to remark that their moderately trustworthy catalogue of 1869 contains 12 volumes of the sixteenth century musical publications, 48 of the seventeenth and 483 of the eighteenth. He does not make it clear whether or no he alludes to books on music or music *and* books. Nor does it appear that this collection has been very materially increased since then. However, the Library of Congress now possesses eleven hundred books on music alone, not volumes, but different books, and of these about 70 belong to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, 200 to the seventeenth and 800 to the eighteenth century. According to my estimate this is about one-third of all the books on music printed before 1800, not counting different editions or

translations into other than the English language. If it is considered that many of the books or pamphlets, such as most of the queer Latin dissertations and orations on music, are not worth having, and that many others have entirely disappeared, our collection will be conceded to be already quite extraordinary, indeed equal to those at Bologna, London, Brussels, Berlin or elsewhere. Otherwise the bibliographical committee of the I. M. G. for the revision of Eitner's Quellen-Lexikon, would hardly have agreed to accept our printed cards as the practical basis for their work. The exhibit made in honor of your meeting in Washington fortunately relieves me of the necessity of letting special works by Tovar, Aaron, Gaffurius, Cerone, Glarean, Ornithoparchus, Luscinius, Koswick, Guerson, Jumilhac, de Caus, Lord North, Tapia, Mersenne, Simpson, Locke and many other early theoreticians pass review here by title.

These old timers will always interest the theoretician and the antiquarian more than the practitioner, to whom they generally appeal not as sources of historical information, but as curiosities. However, the practitioner, too, may now venture on a "Studienreise" to Washington without being disappointed. By practitioner I mean the performer, the conductor, the critic whose interests are centered in the present and last century. This modern music may now be found in the Library of Congress, regardless of country and school, in a more exhaustive representation than in any other institution, American or European, except possibly one. As I am familiar with the resources of the most important collections here and abroad, this statement is not an idle boast. It is a fact. The exception made refers to the "Deutsche Musiksammlung" at Berlin, the result of a very clever idea of Prof. Dr. Altmann, who actually succeeded in persuading a large number of music publishers of all countries to deposit at Berlin, free of charge, the issues of their firms, some running back a hundred years or more. How far this appeal to the generosity of the music publishers has carried Prof. Altmann, is not yet fully known, but

that it has placed the "Deutsche Musiksammlung", an annex to the Royal Library collections, *hors de concours* in many respects, particularly with reference to modern German music, cannot be doubted. We could rely on the generosity of the European music publishers only in so far as they were willing to grant a substantial reduction of price on wholesale orders. This enabled us to acquire a collection of modern music, whether German, Russian, French, English, Italian, Bohemian, Scandinavian, etc., that is sufficiently complete for all practical purposes. The more important a composer, the more numerous, of course, his compositions are here represented, and we have not permitted personal predilections to interfere in the least with the application of this principle. The American student who desires to study or write on the art of prominent composers of the nineteenth century, no longer need paraphrase what he finds in articles or books and certainly need not travel to Europe. The fullest opportunity is given him here to base his observations on the works themselves, thereby facilitating original comment. To mention names might not be necessary before a congress of musicians, but just as an illustration of the variety of our resources in this respect it may be of interest to know that we possess practically all or the majority of the printed works of such major and minor masters as Brahms, Raff, Rubinstein, Draeseke, Kiel, Rheinberger, von Herzogenberg, Jensen, Kirchner, Bruckner, Wolf, Richard Strauss, Reger, Liszt, Volkmann, Smetana, Dvorák, Fibich, Gounod, Saint-Saëns, Franck, Lalo, Massenet, Lefebvre, Boisdeffre, d'Indy, Debussy, Benoit, Lekeu, Glinka, Balakirew, Tschaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakow, Arensky, Scriabine, Rachmaninow, Moussorgsky, J. P. E. and Emil Hartmann, Gade, Grieg, Sinding, Sjoegren, Stenhammar, Peterson-Berger, Nielsen, Sibelius, Parry, Mackenzie, Stanford, Coleridge-Taylor, Elgar, Bantock, Delius, etc., etc. These and other masters form the pillars of our collection of what may be called current music. Around these pillars we have, of course, built up a sufficient representation of the art of such composers as have not visibly

influenced the current of music but in their best and ripest work approach the level of real merit, at least from the standpoint of the historian. In certain directions we have not quite perfected the scheme, but as concerns, for instance, orchestral music in score, we have now practically reached our goal.

The best I have reserved for the last. It is our collection of full scores of Dramatic Music. The best, though it by no means yet exhausts our ambitions. In the prefatory note to the printed catalogue the chief difficulties were recorded that confront every collector of this type of material. One of these difficulties is the great and sometimes prohibitive cost of opera scores, another the fact that many important old operas were never printed, are preserved only in a few libraries in autograph or contemporary manuscript copies which rarely if ever appear on the market; a third difficulty, the stubborn refusal of certain publishers to sell their opera scores to libraries, and a fourth the still more stubborn refusal of certain unavoidable libraries to permit the copying of old opera scores. This last difficulty interferes annoyingly with our project described above, to acquire old operas in special transcripts. Still, we are beginning to see daylight. The transcripts made at the libraries which treat us in a spirit of professional courtesy, are accumulating rapidly, and it is merely a question of a few years until our collection of old, unprinted operas will symmetrically represent the art of composing operas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The acquisition of the comparatively few printed operas of the seventeenth century depends on a combination of funds, luck and circumstances. One may aspire to Peri's "Eurydice" in the original, but its possession depends entirely on these three factors, and it is even a question if a public institution like ours may not prefer comparatively cheap photographic reproductions to the very costly originals.

The third difficulty enumerated above explains why we do not yet possess such full scores as that of Lalo's "Roi d'Ys", Nessler's "Trompeter von Säckingen", Pfitzner's "Rose vom

Liebesgarten ", or Mascagni's " Cavalleria rusticana ". In almost every instance of this kind we made heroic efforts to place the scores before the American musician, but we failed, and we certainly were warranted in breaking off negotiations, if the offer was accompanied by restrictive conditions which the Library of Congress could not with dignity accept. Finally, we were powerless if the scores of well known modern operas had never been published, if the manuscripts had disappeared entirely, or if they were in private hands.

Viewed in the light of these difficulties and obstacles every impartial expert will admit that it is a unique collection, at least of modern operas, and that it bids fair to become the most evenly developed center of research known. You may not find at present, for instance, more than perhaps six operas by Scarlatti instead of thirty or forty, but on the other hand you will find thirty or forty and more composers represented by their best works who do not figure in other libraries at all. Furthermore, the collection is not restricted to a few nations, but is international to an unprecedented extent, as a comparison of our catalogue with other catalogues will prove. On this fact we of the Library of Congress lay by far greater stress than on the possession of single rarities as, for instance, Marco da Gagliano's " Dafne ", Vitali's " Aretusa ", Rinaldo da Capua's " La Bohemienne ", Dargomjschky's " Rusalka ", Verdi's " Falstaff ", Dukas' " Ariane et Barbe-Bleue ", Mussorgski's " Boris Godunow ", " The new " Rienzi of Wagner, Césår Franck's " Hulda ", " Debussy's " Pelleas et Mélisande ", Schilling's Pfeifertag ", Strauss' " Salome ", or the autographs score of Cyrill Kistler's " Kunihild ". All this may be more or less my private opinion, but it surely signifies something in support of it, if Dr. Heuss in a review of our printed catalogue intimates that at some future date the historian of opera may more profitably undertake a journey to Washington than gather his information from all corners of Europe. It is, furthermore, a fact that Mr. J. E. Matthew, certainly an authority among collectors, claims that already only one col-

lection, that at the Royal Conservatory in Brussels, compares with ours, and another authority, Mr. Henry de Curzon does not even extend this courtesy to Brussels. Possibly these compliments are a trifle exaggerated, but they were based on our catalogue printed early in 1908, and since then we have acquired about three hundred additional scores, thus enabling the American musician to study at the Library of Congress about sixteen hundred operas in score.

This, then, is a candid statement of our relative strength and weakness. Even in our best developed sections gaps will be found — I find them every week and not always such as could not have been avoided — yet the critical visitor may in fairness be expected to remember that we accomplished what has been accomplished in six years, and that this is too short a period for the display of dainty filigree work.

Another parting remark! If ever the musical profession comes to a full appreciation of what is being done in the Library of Congress, may it not forget that the efforts of the specialist would have been wholly futile without the liberal, broad-minded attitude of the chief of the chiefs toward our art, Mr. Herbert Putnam. And finally, though the Library of Congress may be predestined to stand in a class by itself, we should not forget that there exist other fine collections in America. Not nearly as large as ours and no longer so important, the collections at the Lenox Library in New York, the Newberry in Chicago and the Boston Public, with which Mr. Allen A. Brown's name is so indelibly associated, would hold an honorable place in any country, and each of these institutions, by the way, may point to treasures which now and for all time will help the Library of Congress to remember that spiteful little fable of the fox and the grapes.

THE MUSIC EXHIBIT AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Exhibition of Music and Books on Music was set forth in the main exhibition hall of the Library, and filled six of the large double show-cases. Though arranged primarily in honor of the meeting of the M. T. N. A., it is to remain open for several months.

The exhibit was arranged in the following groups: —

I. *Full Scores of Rare Operas,* old and modern, — such as Marco da Gagliano's *Dafne,* 1608; Lesueur's *Alexandre à Babylon;* Bizet's *Carmen;* Verdi's *Falstaff;* Scarlatti's *Trionfo dell'onore,* 1718; Bishop's *Ninetta* (autograph); Lawes' *Psyche;* Portugal's *Demofoonte,* 1808 (autograph); Kistler's *Kunihild* (autograph); Jomelli's *L'Artaserse,* 1750 (specimen of transcripts made for the Library); Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande;* Strauss' *Salome.*

II. *Music in General,* old and modern — such as Douland's "Musical Banquet," 1610; "Comes Amoris," 1687-94; "Bird Fancyer's Delight," 17—; Este's "Whole Booke of Psalmes," 1604; Marcello's "Il Pianto e il Riso delle quattro Staggioni," 1731 (supposedly unknown to bibliographers); Caccini's "Nuove musiche," 1601; Hasse's Credo (autograph); Couperin's "Pièces de clavecin," 1713; Filtz's Symphony in A major (not mentioned by Riemann); C. Ph. Em. Bach's Cembalo concerto in E minor (unpublished); Haydn's Divertimento (unpublished); Herzogenberg's "Erntefeier" (unpublished score); Verdi's Requiem; original editions of famous works by Beethoven, Schubert, etc.; the Jena Liederhandbuch, 1896, and similar specimens of photographic fac-similes.

III. *Americana,* old and modern. (*a*) Original editions of famous Civil War songs, such as "Dixie," 1860; (*b*) Early editions of national songs, etc., like "Yankee Doodle," "Liberty Song," Billings' "Chester," "President's March" ("Hail, Columbia"), "Jefferson's March," "The Star-Spangled Banner" (including "The Anacreontick Song" in John Stafford Smith's Fifth Book of Canzonets, *circa* 1780), Reinagle's "Federal March," 1788 (supposedly the only copy extant); (*c*) Such rarities as the illuminated Ephrata Hymn Book, 1746, Lyon's "Urania," 1762, Flagg's "Collection of the Best Psalm Tunes," 1764, Billings' "New England Psalm Singer," 1770, autograph sonatas by Reinagle, "Military Glory of Great Britain," 1762, autograph letters of Francis Hopkinson to Thomas Jefferson; (*d*) More modern Americana, like the original edition of Foster's "Old Folks at Home," 1851, Gottschalk's "Last Hope" (showing contrast between first two issues), MacDowell's "Marionettes" (showing contrast between editions of 1888 and 1901), MacDowell's "Indian Suite" (autograph), Dudley Buck's *Golden Legend* (autograph), Paine's unfinished tone-poem "Lincoln" (autograph).

IV. *Old Books about Music* (about seventy examples, mostly from the 16th century) — such as Aaron's "Lucidario," 1545, Bonaventura da Brescia's "Regula musice plane," 1513, Gaffurio's "Practica musicae," 1496, and his "Apologia," 1520, Glareanus' "Dodekachordon," 1547 (unique copy, containing errata, etc., in author's autograph), Hugo von Reutlingen's "Flores musices," 1488, Lossius' "Erotemata," 1563, Ornithoparcus' "Micrologus," 1517, Tovar's "Libro de musica pratica," 1510, De Caus' "Institution harmonique," 1615, Lord North's "Philosophical Essay," 1677, Cerone's "El Melopeo y Maestro," 1613, John IV. of Portugal's "Difesa della Musica Moderna," 1666, Mace's "Musick's Monument," 1676, Tate's "Essay," 1710, Le Blanc's "Defense de la Basse de Viole," 1740, Sibire's "La Chélonomie," 1806.

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